

IMPARTIAL REFLECTIONS

ON THE

C O N D U C T

OF THE LATE

ADMINISTRATION AND OPPOSITION,

AND OF THE

AMERICAN CONGRESS.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

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THE NEW YORK

OF THE CITY

AND THE STATE

IMPARTIAL REFLECTIONS

ON THE

C O N D U C T

OF THE LATE

ADMINISTRATION AND OPPOSITION,

AND OF THE

AMERICAN CONGRESS;

IN WHICH

The CAUSES and CONSEQUENCES of the destructive War between GREAT BRITAIN and the revolted COLONIES are particularly considered, and an immediate Suspension of Hostilities is earnestly recommended.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba majestri. HOR.

L O N D O N:

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IMPARTIAL REFLECTIONS, &c.

AMONG the various tribes of animals in whom the Creator has implanted a desire of associating with their kind, and to whom he has given a power of resisting the attacks of their enemies, one general principle prevails, which, whether it is distinguished by the appellation of instinct in brutes, or of reason in man, incites them to *unite* in times of common danger, that they may avail themselves of the greatest benefit resulting from their social state, and oppose, with collected force, that hostile violence, which the utmost efforts of individuals would be insufficient to repel.

In the lowest degree of civilization, mankind differ but little from some superior classes of their fellow animals; and if, in following the direct but narrow track, in which simple nature leads them, they meet with any unusual impediment or unexpected adversary, "honest
"instinct comes a volunteer" and not only affords them the most immediate, but in general

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ral the most effectual means of averting the impending danger. But as society refines, it departs from nature, and disdaining its former faithful guide, demands a more able and skilful conductor.

In the highly polished nations of Europe, it is an established maxim, that reason alone must assume the direction of public affairs; and tho' it sometimes happens that the monarch may not be favoured with a greater portion of understanding than the meanest of his subjects, his minister is, without doubt, a prodigy of intellectual excellence.

Such are the guardians and pilots even of those nations, on which (however they are enlightened by science) liberty has not yet deigned to smile. In these unhappy regions, the superior ranks of the community guard the tree of knowledge with unremitting vigilance; no groveling *serpent* is there permitted to ascend, and taste the forbidden fruit, lest the multitude should be tempted to partake of it, and the consequence of their eyes being opened, should be the inevitable destruction of a tyranny founded in blind *credulity* and ignorance.

Thus

Thus the common herd are held in severe and ignominious subjection, while the great enjoy those honours and emoluments to which from their exalted rank and abilities, they imagine they have so just a claim.

But in *this* favoured island, which has at length attained a degree of politeness and refinement, equal, if not superior, to its accomplished rival, and where liberty has condescended to fix her residence, *every* member of the community is emancipated from the shackles of despotism and ignorance; the tree of knowledge, congenial to the soil, is every where to be found, and even our enemies must confess, that we abound with *serpents* to tempt those who, from want of curiosity or attention, might otherwise pass by the delicious fruit untasted.

We are a nation of philosophers and politicians; we may, therefore, in the midst of our public calamities, console ourselves with reflecting, that we not only exceed our combined enemies in valour and military skill, but that Great Britain, at this present moment, contains a much greater number of *men*, than France, Spain, Holland, and the revolted Colonies.

As this assertion may not obtain from every reader that degree of credit which is due to a *self-evident* proposition, it may be necessary to adduce some convincing arguments in its support.

Man has been, by the greatest philosophers, as well ancient as modern, defined to be a *rational animal*; now if this is a just definition, which may surely be taken for granted, it must necessarily follow, that the number of *men* which any nation contains, cannot exceed that of its *rational* inhabitants. France, Spain, and Holland may, on a fair calculation of the different estimates made by the various writers on political arithmetic, be supposed to contain at this time thirty millions of animals, who are endowed with "the human form divine;" from these, a due proportion of women and children must be deducted, and the true number of rational animals, *i. e.* of *men*, must be collected from the remainder. But France and Spain being, as has been before observed, under the baleful influence of despotic power, the multitude, abandoned, like the flocks they feed, to the blind impulse of nature, can be considered in no higher light than the *servum pecus*, or "pack-horses of the state;" and the *higher* orders of the community must consequently contain the *whole* number of men.

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It may probably be alledged, that Holland, being not only very populous, but a land of liberty, the number of its rational inhabitants must be very considerable; but when the influence of *climate* on the human intellect is duly weighed, and proper allowance made for its powerful operation, it will evidently appear, that the *dull* foggy air which is generated by the bogs and morasses of their High Mightinesses, and the *heavy* atmosphere with which their country is constantly surrounded, must render it the most unfavourable of any in the known world, to the production of *rational* animals; nor can there be a stronger proof of its pernicious effects on the human mind than the Dutch have lately given, by entering into a *confederacy*, which is, *on their part*, equally repugnant to reason as it is to justice, because it is manifestly intended to *exalt* the power of their inveterate and formidable enemies, on the *ruins* of a nation which has always proved itself their best and surest friend.

It was once proposed in a Dutch or German university, as a question for logical discussion, "whether, *in rerum naturâ*, it was *possible* for a Dutchman to be a wit?" Which, after much learned argumentation, was decided in the negative; and it is pretty clear from their conduct on the

present occasion, that their reason does not greatly excel their wit.

Thus the unprejudiced reader, if he keeps in remembrance the true philosophical definition of *man*, must be convinced, to his great comfort, that the number of our European enemies is inconsiderable. The Americans are indeed our only formidable adversaries; derived from the same common ancestors with ourselves, they inherit our political and philosophical abilities, which have been in a progressive state of improvement ever since they were transferred to America, notwithstanding the severe checks they have occasionally met with, from the chilling blasts of arbitrary power, which have been wafted to them across the Atlantic from their *unkind* step-mother. But since they have been *blessed* with independence, there can be little doubt but the wise, mild, and equitable government of Congress, will be as beneficial to the *mental* faculties of its subjects, as the celestial beds of that renowned philosopher, Dr. Graham, are likely to be to the corporeal system of that favoured progeny which shall spring from them; we must, therefore, expect that the Americans will *soon* be, if they are not already, far superior to that "puny, feeble race of probationary immortals,"

who

who fret and crawl about upon this paltry island.*"

But let us not despair ; though every subject of the free and independent states of North America should be included in the true definition of man ; let us remember that they are not on the highest computation, equal in number, to above a third part of the inhabitants of Great Britain, and that every free-born Briton is in the most comprehensive sense of the word, a *man*.

We are all as the poet expresses it :—

—“ The states whole thunder born to weild,
“ And shake alike the senate and the field.”

Every man, from the cobbler to the peer, is qualified either to level a musquet at the daring invader, or to declaim on the most doubtful and important question in politics.—*Alehouses*, as well as coffee-houses, have their clubs, in which the conduct of ministers, patriots, admirals and generals, is freely and ably scrutinized ; their errors are, in these *wittena gemots*, or “ assemblies of wise men,” so *clearly* exposed, and the

* See the numerous advertisements published by Dr. Graham himself.

means of rectifying them so plainly pointed out, that if the political farce of "The Devil to Pay, or the Statesmen Metamorphosed," which was in *rehearsal* in June 1780, should ever be publicly acted, for the benefit of our enemies, we might expect to see great men ascend from the *Canaille*, whose fame in the cabinet, in the opposition, in the navy, and in the field, though it could not *equal* that of their illustrious predecessors in those honourable departments, might place their names high in the list of British worthies.—What rich jewels may now be ripening in this *mine of politics* to blaze forth at a future period.—

"Some mute inglorious R——m——d there may
rest

"Some Parker, dreadful to his country's foes."

If we reflect on the eminent men who have lately emerged from their primæval meanness and obscurity, to occupy the highest posts in the government of the free and independent States, and consider what honour and benefit has accrued to themselves, and to the community, from their exaltation, we cannot sufficiently admire the wisdom of the American legislators, who, in forming their republic, paid no regard to the absurd distinctions of rank or birth, but
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have established so happy an *equality* throughout the whole community, that the cobbler may quit his awl for a truncheon, of the *botcher*, by an easy and natural transition, may become a state-reformer, a delegate to Congress, and the *tres cher grand ami* of his most Christian Majesty.

The Americans, it must be acknowledged, have, *at present*, greatly the advantage of us in this respect; but the unbounded freedom our constitution allows of writing and speaking on subjects of the greatest national importance, in which is included the liberty of the press (a privilege which Congress, for very weighty and obvious reasons, will not permit its subjects the enjoyment of), is surely more than sufficient to incline the balance in our favour.

Have we not our *Lyceums*, our *Forums*, and various other societies, instituted for the *liberal* discussion of such questions as any of their members may think proper to propose, whether of a philosophical, theological, or political nature? What are these but seminaries of useful knowledge and refined elocution? In these, the representative may receive, even from the *lowest* of his constituents, instructions how he may properly discharge the great trust reposed in him—
our

our generals, or admirals, (who, though great, are not infallible) may learn from the mechanic, or apprentice, how to conduct future battles and engagements—our ministers (wise and good as they are) may find that they are still far short of absolute perfection, and the true friends to their country, invigorated, and, as it were, electrified by the holy flame of patriotism, which burns with unusual fervor in these assemblies, may be excited to the most glorious exertions of public virtue.

Possessed of such signal advantages over our enemies, we might bid defiance to their combined force, if a spirit of *union* prevailed among us, by which we might be enabled to direct the whole power of the nation against those antient and inveterate foes to Britain, and to our deluded brethren in America, who now, by an artful combination of force and fraud, hope to involve them in one common ruin with ourselves.

The writer who recommends unanimity to his countrymen, at a time when the nation is unhappily divided into the very great and powerful parties, distinguished by the appellations of Administration and Opposition, necessarily incurs an imputation of adhering to, or being dependent

dependent upon the *former*; but if he is conscious of the rectitude of his intentions, he will regard this invidious charge with the most *stoical* indifference, well knowing it can only proceed from *prejudiced* men, who are incapable of passing a candid judgment on those who differ from them in opinion; or from those unworthy members of society, who, regulating their own conduct by the sordid principle of *self-interest*, will not suppose a possibility of being actuated by more liberal motives.

It is not to *such* men, nor to *either* of those parties whose long and violent contentions for superiority, have reduced their country to its present deplorable state, that this Essay is addressed; but to that awful tribunal *the impartial public*, where, for the good of his country, and for their own honour, every real friend to Britain must wish to see the most eminent men in abilities and integrity, of either party, appear with that degree of distinction which their respective merits may justly claim.

Should the reader be disgusted by the appearance of levity or ridicule in the foregoing part of this Performance, it is requested he will not misinstrue the intention of the writer, by apply-

applying them to any particular person or party.

The anonymous scribbler, who would meanly avail himself of the opportunity he derives from his *obscurity*, to abuse that inestimable privilege which the British constitution affords him, by publishing scurrility, calumny, or personal invective, by vilifying any character public or private, which is entitled to esteem, or by endeavouring to render those principles ridiculous which ought to be *revered*, is a disgrace to whatever party he espouses.

The wretch who thus shamefully prostitutes his abilities, is unworthy the name of Briton; and he who, disdaining the guilt and infamy of this conduct, is yet so naturally weak, or so far blinded by prejudice, as to subscribe with *implicit* deference the political creed of any party, or to support their measures with undeviating concurrence, by subjecting his reason to a controul no less *impotent* than *absolute*, degrades himself below the character of a man.

While the arbitrary constitution of other governments, established among the most civilized nations, exact a slavish obedience from
their

their subjects, it is the glorious privilege of Englishmen to enjoy the benefits arising from subjection, without feeling themselves oppressed by its rigours.

The *unbounded* freedom of enquiry which our constitution not barely admits, but which is its *animating principle*, is the most considerable of the many blessings by which we are distinguished from other nations. It fully compensates for the forfeiture which mankind are obliged to make of their natural freedom, when they exchange the ferocious licentiousness of savage life, for the rational and necessary subordination, so essential to the existence of civil society.

By the exercise of this right, an artificial *equilibrium* is preserved in the community, more beneficial, and perhaps more *exact*, than that which some philosophers have conceived to exist in a state of nature. For if it should be admitted, that man is *not* naturally a social animal, and that every man, being born with *equal* rights, is totally independent of his fellow creatures, what will these concessions avail, or how is this natural independence to be supported, or the just equilibrium to be preserved, in a state wherein there are *no laws* to restrain every

every individual from exerting the *whole* force of his mental and corporeal powers solely to his *own* emolument, unless it can be proved that all men are created with equal *powers* to assert their natural rights ?

But so far is this from being true, that our own reason is sufficient to convince us no such natural equality exists ; and the concurrent testimony of history, from its earliest date to the present day, incontestably proves, that in consequence of the physical *inequality* which universally prevails among men, they have invariably *deviated* from the state of nature to that of civil society ; to which they have most commonly been compelled by the oppressive exertion of superior natural powers in *one*, or a combination of *a few*, which is the *origin* of all *despotic* governments ; though there are not wanting instances of communities having been established by a *social compact* voluntarily entered into, to prevent the superior mental or corporeal abilities of individuals from being prejudicial to their fellow-creatures.

Governments thus formed are *free* in their original constitution ; because their basis is fixed on this leading characteristic of Liberty
or

or *Whigism*, that the supreme power of the state is not a *right*, but a *trust*; that it is delegated, either by the expressed or implied consent of the whole community; and that those to whom it is confided, are accountable to their *constituents* for their public conduct.

The resemblance which these general outlines of free governments bear to the compleat and regular plan of our excellent constitution, is manifest even to the most superficial observer; but though it will appear equally plain on a more close inspection, it may not perhaps be discovered by a transient glance; that our government received at its original creation, a permanent animating principle, which nothing but a *general corruption* and defection from integrity, diffused throughout the community, can injure; and which may possibly *survive* a disease, whose baleful influence has destroyed the greatest empires.

The right, which the British constitution *confirms* to the people, of electing their representatives, and that liberty which every individual enjoys of communicating his opinions on political subjects, is, if the expression may be allowed, the soul of our government, and pre-
serves

serves a degree of equality incompatible with a state of nature, without destroying that *subordination* which is essentially necessary to be maintained in social life.

In Britain, the greatest peer of the realm, nay even the *chief magistrate* himself, is obliged to submit his public conduct to the examination of his subjects; the meanest of whom, in point of rank, has a right not only to pass his judgment on the actions of his sovereign, but to *communicate* his decision to the public. While the neighbouring nations are held in ignominious bondage to the tyranny of a fellow creature, who may be by nature inferior to the generality of mankind, and whose exaltation to the throne, proves what is commonly called the *blindness* of fortune, British subjects are thus far on a *level* with their governors, that *all* are bound to obey the same laws, the conduct of *all* is liable to the same free and public inquiry; *all* are alike amenable to the respectable tribunal of the *people*. Thus government is continually reminded from whence it derived its origin, and for whose benefit it was invested with authority.

While

While the liberty of the press remains unimpaired, the people *cannot* be enslaved by oppressive tyranny; though they may be debauched by corruption, or inflamed by faction. But this privilege is abused when it exceeds the bounds of decency and moderation, or when it is prostituted to serve the purposes of *any* party. Whether it is, at this time, in more danger of degenerating to licentiousness, than of being restrained by arbitrary power, is not a point here meant to be discussed. I only wish to remind my countrymen, that the degree of liberty our wise constitution allows us, is the happy medium alike remote from the dangerous extremities of anarchy and tyranny, in which the *true* patriot will persevere, with undeviating constancy, in spite of the menaces of power, the baits of corruption, or the intemperate clamours of party zeal.

It is much to be lamented, that our intestine divisions seem to *increase* in exact proportion to the evident necessity we are under to *unite*, if we mean to preserve our existence as a nation.

So strange is the perverseness and inconsistency of human nature, that the people to whom the greatest freedom of enquiry is allowed, and who possess abilities of judging equal,

equal, if not superior, to the rest of mankind, tamely submit their reason to the guidance of party, and yield implicit assent to the political creed of the sect to which they adhere.

Britain may challenge all ages and all nations, to produce from their annals an example equal to that she at this period affords to the admiring world. Where is to be found her rival in arts, in sciences, in empire, in commerce, in valour, and in all those natural and acquired advantages which can exalt a nation? Her most inveterate enemies must either be silent through envy, or acknowledge her pre-eminence. The lustre of her glory at the conclusion of the last successful war, might perhaps be more dazzling; she might *then* be compared to an illustrious Roman, enjoying the pageantry of a triumph; *now* she exhibits the gloomy contrast awefully sublime, and resembles "a great man struggling with the storms of fate," surrounded by powerful and numerous foes, *freely* supported by exhausted, dispirited, disunited friends, yet nobly disdaining to yield, and maintaining a glorious, though unequal contest, to the terror, admiration, and confusion of her enemies.

That this melancholly picture is not overcharged with dark shades, and that it bears too
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near a resemblance to the original, *all* parties will readily allow. But while each admit that the nation is reduced to a deplorable state, they very conscientiously endeavour to shift the *whole* burden from themselves, to lay it on their opponents; and instead of uniting in one glorious and *common effort* to extricate their country from her distress, they plunge her still deeper by unavailing recriminations. How lost to reason would those men be accounted, who, in the midst of a storm which threatened them with instant destruction, and demanded their immediate and united exertions to escape the impending danger, should suspend their endeavours till they had determined by whose means they had been brought to such extremity!

It is not only impolitic, but irrational and unjust, to impute either to Administration or Opposition, the guilt of those accumulated evils which the subjects of the British empire have already suffered, since the commencement of the "** accursed American war.*" Impolitic, because it can answer no other purpose

* The advocates for the American Rebellion, ought to remember, that their epithet, "*accursed,*" may be applied to it with peculiar propriety by the deluded and oppressed people in the revolted Colonies.

than to inflame and perpetuate our civil dissensions, at a time when common danger should stimulate all parties to unite: irrational, because no solid arguments can be adduced to fix so heavy a charge on *either* party; unjust, because it is contrary to truth, and must originate from interest, prejudice, or malevolence. The impolicy of *abetting* the cause of our combined and powerful enemies, who build their firmest hopes of success on our *intestine* divisions, is too evident to require any proof; taking this for granted, I shall therefore endeavour to demonstrate, that it is irrational, untrue, and *consequently* unjust; to assert that the complicated evils resulting to us and the colonies from the American war, are *solely* to be attributed either to *Administration*, to *Opposition*, or to the *Americans* themselves. If this attempt should meet with encouragement and success, or if it should stimulate those of superior abilities to exert them effectually in the joint cause of Britain and America, it will not be made in vain.

Though every unprejudiced person must see, and will readily acknowledge, that there are in these opposite parties men no less distinguished by integrity than abilities, who would disdain to make any motive but principle the rule of their conduct, it cannot be denied that the *general complexion*

plevion of the parties themselves, too evidently indicates the truth of the accusation of corruption and faction with which they reciprocally brand each other. The undue and unremitting influence of these destructive principles, may justly be accounted the *second* or *ostensible* cause of the political evils which, for near a century, have been gaining ground; and within the last twenty years have extended from the centre to the utmost limits of the British empire, like an overwhelming torrent, at once accelerated and diffused.—But corruption and faction, though fatally powerful in their operation, by destroying that virtue, that confidence, that *unanimity*, so essentially necessary to our national prosperity—by making us a profligate, a suspicious, and a divided people.—In fine, by reducing us to our *present* deplorable situation, are themselves no more than effects of *remote*, though certain causes.—By *many* it is asserted, that faction is the *parent* of corruption; and that both are the inseparable concomitants of *all free* governments.—But on a closer investigation it will evidently appear, that neither of these propositions is true. For, though faction may often produce corruption; and *vice versa*, they are not intimately connected with our *own* excellent constitution, but originate from its *defects* not its freedom. Though it certainly derived great and essential benefit from the glorious revolution, it

was still left in a state *far* short of absolute perfection. The House of Commons, as the representative of the whole people of the British empire*, had then its due weight and authority assigned it. But as it is the *actual* representative of those *only* who have the right of voting; far the greater part of the people inhabiting Great Britain, and *all* those in the remote provinces, are very imperfectly represented. Had any method been adopted at the revolution to remedy this great and obvious defect in the constitution, the present rebellion in America might perhaps have been *entirely prevented*, or by being deprived even of a plausible pretence, would have been opposed by the unanimous voice, and crushed by the united weight of the British legislature. It surely cannot be deemed visionary or improbable, to suppose such consequence would have ensued from a more perfect representation of the people; nor can it be questioned that its present very *partial* and *irrational* state has given rise to that corruption on one side, and faction on the other, so justly and so universally complained of. The many venal and small contemptible boroughs who now send members to parliament, have justly been denominated the "rotten parts of the constitution." The member who buys his seat in the House, generally means to dispose of his

* Ireland excepted.

purchase to the *best* advantage, and it needs no very great degree of penetration to discover, that this equitable design may be often much better effected by *opposing* than by abetting the measures of government. A *corrupt* majority will always be opposed by a minority *equally venal*; whose appetite, not *dull* by nature, must be *strengthened* by envy and impatience. Thus, while the public good is the plausible pretence, private emolument is the actuating principle of those adverse parties whose violent commotions have dismembered, and nearly destroyed the British empire*.

Nothing can have a stronger tendency to abate the violence of those contending parties which

• If the right of voting was vested in the people *at large*, instead of being thus *partially* limited—if the petty boroughs were abolished, and the number of members for the counties were proportionably increased—if *disfranchisement* was made the inevitable consequence of accepting, and *incapacity* to obtain a seat in parliament of offering a bribe;—and (*possibly*) if the duration of parliaments was shortened, the most beneficial consequences might still ensue.—For it is evident, that as the influence of corruption is restrained, the virulence of faction will abate; and let the opinions, the property, or the abilities of ministers be what they may, none will be so likely to act from principle *alone*, and to consult the good of the community, as those who obtain their seats by the free voice of the people, unbiassed by corruption, or uninflamed by faction.

have so long and so fatally prevailed in Britain, or to conciliate the almost forgotten affection of our American brethren, than a clear conviction that *all* have greatly erred; that many of the evils they have reciprocally experienced were neither premeditated, nor actually produced by any party; but originated from *remote, inevitable, or unforeseen* causes and events; and that, even in this alarming stage of the dispute between Britain and the revolted Colonies, if an *immediate* stop could be put to hostilities on *both sides*, it would be preferable to the most compleat victory that *either* could obtain over the other in this destructive and impolitic contest.

In public as in private transactions, it generally happens, that mankind form their opinions from events *already* determined, and bestow their praise or censure accordingly. Of such superficial reasoners the majority of all parties are composed; and it is no wonder they are very clamorous and perrinacious advocates of the cause which prejudice or interest induces them to espouse. If a politician of this class insists under the banner of opposition, nothing can be more evident to him, than that *all* our public evils might easily have been *foreseen* and *prevented*; but that they were the necessary inevitable consequences of a *system* adopted by a wicked and corrupt ministry, to bring ruin and
 misery

misery on their country; while to an adversary of equal abilities, it would appear incontrovertibly true, that our intestine divisions, the American rebellion, and the powerful combination of foreign enemies now united to destroy us, are so many *regular connected parts of a plan* originally projected, and invariably pursued by opposition.

Which of these political disputants has the *most*, or rather which of them has the *least* reason on his side, I shall not pretend to determine; but shall endeavour to explore the source whence the rapid torrent of destruction, which has in a few years desolated the British empire, originally proceeds.

Few readers can be supposed ignorant, that the last glorious and successful war was entered into against France, to *relieve* the North American colonies from the encroachments and depredations of a people they *then* looked upon as an inveterate and dangerous enemy. The tempest of war thus excited in America, soon spread through every quarter of the globe; nor did its fury abate till it had destroyed near half a million of the human species, and entailed anguish and penury on a still greater number of miserable survivors. The desolated plains of Germany streamed with the blood that was shed

shed in a dispute about " a few acres of snow in Canada *." Thousands of British heroes were sacrificed, millions of British property dissipated, " to conquer America in Germany." But though the extirpation of the French from North America, which was the primary design of this war, was the most *impolitic* measure Britain could *possibly* adopt; and though it required no extraordinary degree of penetration to foresee the fatal consequences which have since resulted from it, the rapid success which attended the British arms, and the splendor of repeated victories, dazzled the eyes of the people. Having neither inclination nor ability to look forward themselves, they disregarded the admonitions of those who saw the distant tempest which would inevitably be produced from this transient and delusive gleam. Yet, who that reflects on the unparalleled events of that *fatally glorious* war, can wonder Britons were deceived by appearances so flattering to their vanity?

Let us, for a moment, withdraw our eyes from the present melancholy scene, and look back to that era which claims unrivalled pre-eminence in the British annals; to which no modern history can furnish a counterpart.

* See M. Voltaire's *Candide*:

When

When we view the navy of Britain every where triumphant over the united force of France and Spain, when we see our enemies fly before us, and victory rewarding the heroic efforts of our fleets and armies in every quarter of the globe, and behold Britain, at the termination of this rapid course of glory and conquest, invested with an extent of empire greater than that of antient Rome, enriched with an influx of commerce superior to any other country in the world, excelling in the attainment of those arts and sciences which add elegance to wealth, and splendor to power—when we contemplate this *faint* sketch of our country's greatness, let us remember, that it was to the *vigorous* and *decisive* measures of *one man*, and to the *unanimity* with which they were pursued, that this greatness is to be ascribed. Even the abilities of a CHATHAM would have been exerted in vain, if a spirit of *discord* had prevailed, and possibly his *superior* excellence consisted in the *address* by which he conciliated and united the minds of men, and the judicious selection he made of those whom, equally to his immortal honour and their own, he intrusted with the execution of his grand designs. Before he took the administration of public affairs, *timidity* prevailed in the cabinet, and *discord* in the navy and the army; the glory of the British flag was *tarnished*, and

and our arms disgraced ; but no sooner was *national union* restored, than the spirits of our noblest and most renowned ancestors seemed to animate the breasts of those illustrious heroes who then acquired immortal fame, many of them are yet the living monuments of England's glory, and her enemies disgrace ! May the dæmon of discord be banished from their breasts, and may the remembrance of their former deeds, and their country's wrongs, unite them in one common cause, and may our confederated enemies be convinced, that the vigorous and determined efforts of Britons are *still* sufficient to humble their pride, and " save a sinking land ! " *

But in pursuance of my plan, it is necessary to return to the consideration of the *effects* produced by the last war, on this and on the other side of the Atlantic.

As the enemy, though vanquished and depressed, were by no means in a situation to acquiesce in, *whatever* conditions the exorbitant ambition of their elated conquerors might impose ; and as the success of the war had raised

* If this *new* Administration manifest a *real* intention to serve their country, and meet with that steady and unanimous support which was *denied* to their unfortunate predecessors, Britain may have cause to rejoice in the change.

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the expectations of the people to so extravagant a degree, that scarce any thing less than unconditional submission would gratify them, it was impossible *any* peace could be made without producing disappointment and uneasiness.

Whether the peace that was *actually* made was the *best* that could be obtained, it is not here necessary to enquire; suffice it to observe, that though the great council of the nation declared it to be an *honourable* peace, and though this declaration was *certainly true*, because it effected the expulsion of the French from America, which was the *original* object of the war, it was notwithstanding received with evident tokens of dislike, by a considerable part of the people. Nor were there wanting incendiaries to inflame the public resentments, by *pointed* invectives against those who then held the reins of government; who were artfully represented as the projectors of a *wicked plot* to render the S—n arbitrary, and to confer on Scotsmen all the honours and emoluments which government had to bestow.

This, and many other suggestions, too *gross and indecent* to repeat, were continually propagated by the emissaries of faction, and eagerly believed by the heated and credulous multitude,

on

on whom *alone* they were calculated to impose. It was no difficult matter to collect the latent embers of sedition, and blow them to a flame; but the method used on this occasion does peculiar honour to the *contrivance* of the projector. Abuse of ministers was a stale and hacknied artifice; but the subject who was not afraid to publish to the world, that the f——h of his S——n was a l——, must surely be allowed to possess *uncommon* abilities!

Had so gross an affront been offered to any *private* gentleman, he must either have demanded what is called honourable *satisfaction*, or have borne the disgraceful imputation of cowardice. But in this case, the *dignity* of the offended party rather required that resentment for the injury should be converted into *contempt* for the offender, than that he should be (as a celebrated * writer expressed it) “*illuminated* by the rays of royal indignation.” The people, always ready to judge by *appearances*, admired this political luminary, nor could they possibly conceive that he shined by *reflected* light, ’till the source of his brightness was withdrawn, and he sunk to his original obscurity.

There is implanted in every human breast a natural aversion to controul; and in generous

* Junius.

minds

minds it extends far beyond the narrow circle of self-interest; if they see a fellow creature in danger of being oppressed by unequal numbers, or *superior force*, they intuitively run to his assistance; it is not therefore to be wondered at that the spirit of a nation, at all times jealous of their liberties, should be roused by a contention between a subject and his king. They were no less disgusted by its apparent *inequality*, than *alarmed* by the danger they apprehended from the event; and there wanted nothing more to make the cause of W—s their own; no sooner was the sacred name of liberty joined to his, than the latter became "white as snow," all offences, except *one*, were forgotten, and that was transformed into a *virtue*.

Zeal having on this as on many former occasions invested a sinner in the habit of a saint, could with no less facility, give the appearance of *persecution* to justice, and of *tyranny* to law.—Nay, even the stern and rigid substance of law itself was softened and * *dissolved* by the active flame of liberty.

* Though the legality of General Warrants was never doubted till they were declared illegal, Mr. Wilkes obtained a verdict of 400*l.* in consequence of this, *ex post facto* declaration of law, which had in this case the force of law itself.

It

It is foreign to my intention to recapitulate events which every one must remember, or to agitate questions on which, as Junius observes when speaking of the Middlesex election, "inspiration itself could scarcely throw any new light." But it is necessary to observe, that men of the highest estimation for integrity and ability were then greatly divided in their opinions on subjects of the highest national importance; and that the *acrimony* of their debates inflamed, as the extensive and rapid circulation of them *diffused* that malignant spirit of party which has ^{*nearly*} ~~greatly~~ effected the destruction of this great and flourishing empire.

Whoever impartially considers the conduct of Administration and Opposition, from the origin of their contentions to the present moment, will be convinced, that neither party can, with the least degree of reason, throw the *whole* blame on their opponents.

Though it should be granted, that in the prosecution of Mr. W—s, administration never took a *single* measure that was not warranted by precedent, by law, and by the principles of the constitution (which perhaps is *more* than Opposition will admit) their conduct cannot be vindicated in point of *policy*.

A super-

A superficial knowledge of our history is sufficient to convince us, that whenever our sovereigns *condescend* to enter into contest with a *subject*, they tarnish the lustre, and weaken the power of the crown. If they vanquish, how futile is their triumph! If they fail, how severe their disgrace!

The first step they take on this dangerous ground, however circumspect, is sure to awaken the jealousy of their people: if power, inflamed by resentment (perhaps by *just* resentment) should be so *admirably* tempered by wisdom and discretion as *never* to exceed the bounds of law or of equity, yet how liable are the perverted optics of jealousy to mistake! with what ease may artifice convert

———"Trifles light as air;"
To "confirmations strong"
"As proofs of holy writ!"

The K——, or Administration, that wishes to be respected in this country, must pay *some regard* even to the *prejudices* of the people. Nothing can alienate the affections, or exasperate the minds of a free people, so much as the *contempt* of their governors; nor is the strongest conviction they can possibly have that their measures are right, to be urged in excuse for it.

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But though even the *causeless* murmurs of the people should never be despised, the individual, who for his own emolument endeavours to excite them, is justly and most severely punished by contempt. When a man of such principles, assuming confidence from the degree of popularity he has acquired, is hardy enough to transfer his abuse from ministers to the K—g, it is evident he *courts* persecution. If he can collect “the rays of royal indignation,” he is sensible “they will illuminate, though they cannot consume him.” Shielded by his popularity, he invites their most powerful energy; and his *patriotism* shines with additional lustre, as their fervency increases. But if the efforts of his calumny are regarded with a *mortifying indifference*, his hopes are blasted, and he is left to lament in obscurity the anguish of disappointed ambition, and the universal contempt which attends *unsuccessful* villainy.

If Administration committed an error in *rewarding* their enemy with that resentment he *wished* to excite; the conduct of Opposition on this occasion was no less inexcusable for abetting a cause they knew to be unjust; for propagating many insinuations against government which had no foundation in *truth* or reason; and for diffusing a *general* spirit of discontent throughout the nation, merely that they might exalt *themselves*, by
depressing

depressing their successful and envied competitors.

While their *real object* was not very difficult to be discerned; the good of their country was their plausible pretence; the grievances of the people was the constant *burden* of their melancholy song; and those who had the *least* sensibility of them, were, as usual, *loudest* in the chorus; while the lower ranks of the community, oppressed by the weight of those *real ills* which are the inseparable concomitants of poverty, bore in silence those burdens which it does not enter either into the ** heads* of ministers or patriots to conceive, or into their hearts to alleviate.

So

• Though the *leaders* of each party have been very differently employed, every friend to the people must find peculiar satisfaction in observing, that many members on *both sides* of the House, distinguished no less by the sensibility of their hearts than by their fortunes and abilities, have made it the constant object of their attention to alleviate the distresses of the poor, and there appears to be reason to hope, as the rage of party contention abates, their virtuous and patriotic labours may be attended with success.

As their elevated station places them at too great a distance from the objects of their care, to trace the various causes of the poverty and misery of the lower class of the community

So strange and inconsistent a thing is human nature, that even in this nation of philosophers, the very people who will submit *quietly* to any imposition, till some *friend* thinks it worth his while to *tell them* they are *hurt*, may be inflamed to a degree of madness by the most extravagant, ill-grounded, or remote suggestions of injury *intended* them. What surprizing effects have the *sounds* of W—s and Liberty! No Popery! and others of *equal* significance produced, when modulated by *skilful* performers, and conveyed thro' *proper* instruments!

But if a supercilious contempt of the *just* complaints of an injured people is the characteristic of tyranny; if an insolent disregard even of their *groundless* murmurs denotes weakness in Administration, a base application of their passions and prejudices to the interested views of the

community to their different sources, it may not be unreasonable or improper to hint, that the destructive practice of gambling in *lottery insurance*—the extortion of *pawn-brokers*, who are suffered to supply them with the means of gaming, at the exorbitant interest of *thirty per cent.* and the unlimited and most pernicious use the poor are permitted to make of spirituous liquors, are either of them alone sufficient to bring inevitable ruin on thousands!—How destructive then to society must be the *joint* operation of these causes, and how loudly do *such* grievances call for parliamentary redress!!

party

party which constantly endeavours to excite and inflame them, and an indiscriminate opposition to every measure of government, are surely very equivocal signs of that rectitude which should distinguish true patriots from unprincipled impostors.

This succinct review of the line of conduct pursued by the contending parties, and of the causes from which they arose, has hitherto been *solely* confined to Great-Britain; but if we extend our consideration to America, we shall find sufficient reason to conclude, that the unhappy breach between the Colonies and the Mother Country proceeded from the same source whence our *intestine* divisions derived their origin.

The maxim "that allegiance and protection are reciprocal," has often been applied by the advocates for the cause of Britain, in support of her claims on the Colonies. This maxim is undoubtedly founded in truth and justice; but if its truth is admitted, these conclusions must inevitably follow:

First, When government with-holds from its subjects that protection which they require, it has *no just* claim to their allegiance.

Secondly, When subjects are so circumstanced or situated, that they conceive no further assistance

ance or protection from government is *required*, they regard that allegiance for which they no longer receive an equivalent, as an intolerable burden, from which nothing but Independence can relieve them.

The expulsion of the French from North America, which was effected by the last war, and confirmed by the peace, placed our Colonies on that Continent in the peculiar situation to which this *last* conclusion is immediately applicable.

No longer in danger from the secret machinations, or open violence of an artful and ambitious enemy, whose near neighbourhood had always been the source of fear and anxiety, and from whom the power of the parent state was *alone* able to protect them, their sentiments with respect to the *sovereignty* of Great-Britain, were totally different from those they entertained when in continual *need* of her assistance. From that auspicious æra, distinguished by the total extirpation of their inveterate and formidable enemy, they dated their Independence, though perhaps it would *then* have appeared incredible even to themselves, that they should court the *alliance* of this hostile power to assist them in destroying their generous protectors.

This

This was an injury of so deep a dye, and so certain in its consequences to bring down heavy vengeance on their own heads, that it could not possibly proceed from premeditation; so far from it, that I am convinced if it had been deliberately proposed to the revolted Colonies in the early stage of the dispute, they would have rejected it with general indignation; and *even now* it is held in just abhorrence by a great majority of the people, who evidently yield a constrained obedience to the arbitrary power of their rulers, while they regard the haughty demeanour of their *new* ally with a degree of anger, impatience and disdain.

But those to whom the administration of government in Great-Britain was confided, drew very different conclusions from the same premises. To *them* it evidently appeared, that the peace *confirmed* to the Colonies, those signal advantages which the war had obtained; they could not be ignorant, that this war was entered into by Great-Britain in consequence of the *earnest* supplications of her American subjects, who were not only secured by its success from the future attacks of their enemies, but were the actual *receivers* of *many millions* expended by Great-Britain in its prosecution; from which they derived riches, strength, and safety, while we were impoverished, weakened, and consequently endangered.

They knew that the enormous sum of seventy millions had been added to the national debt by the expences of this war; and they conceived it to be strictly consonant to *equity*, that the Colonies should take upon themselves *some* part of a burden which the parent state was hardly able to sustain; which had been so intolerably increased through *their* means, and for *their* benefit. It does not appear ever to have been the intention of *any* administration to demand *rigid* justice from the Colonies; for though it cannot be denied that *one third* at least of the national debt has been incurred on *their account*, the property of Britons *alone* is the security for the *principal*; and nothing further was required of the Colonies than to pay a *very inconsiderable* part of the interest. On these principles, and with this view, the Stamp Act was framed during Mr. Grenville's administration. The most strenuous advocate for the Americans could not pretend to dispute the justice of the demand; and the refusal of the Colonies to comply with it was no less ungrateful than unjust. But justice and gratitude are not to be met with in communities or public bodies, of whom interest is the soul. Animated and informed by this principle, the Provincial Assemblies clearly discerned the *inconvenience* of parting with any thing they were able to *retain*, or of submitting to a power they now conceived

ceived themselves strong enough to resist. The Stamp Act, therefore, was rejected by the Colonies for the same reasons, and with similar tokens of contempt and aversion, which they in the beginning of the present fatal contention expressed against the tax on tea. The repeal of the *obnoxious* bill was an obvious expedient to appease the gathering storm; and was readily adopted by all parties, as a measure dictated by sound policy, calculated at once to preserve the dignity of the British legislature, and to quiet the minds of the Americans.

But however it might appear to the bulk of the people in England and America, it could not escape the penetration of any man in either country who allowed himself the least time to reflect on these transactions and their probable consequences, that the *seeds* of dissention had taken *deep root*; that the reconciliation was *insincere* on both sides, and that the mischief was procrastinated but not prevented by the repeal of the Stamp Act. It might possibly have been delayed much longer if no further steps had been taken by government; but as the Americans had actually "*passed the Rubicon*" and plainly *announced* their pretensions to independence, by *denying the right of parliament to tax them*, which, previous to the Stamp Act being passed, they had never disputed; (but had actually submitted to be taxed by

by parliaments under every reign, from * Charles the II^d to that of his present Majesty) it was deemed expedient and necessary that the authority of the British Legislature thus *openly denied*, should be as explicitly *asserted* by some public and solemn act.

The famous Declaratory Act was therefore passed by the general concurrence of *all parties*, which in direct conformity to the principles of the British constitution, asserted, that the authority of parliament extended to the Colonies, and that it had a right to demand their obedience to its acts *in all cases whatsoever*. Sovereignty cannot be defined in any terms stronger or more explicit; and it is demonstrably evident, that if parliament has (as this Declaratory Act asserts) a right to bind the Colonies *in all cases whatsoever*, it *must* have it in any *particular case*. This is so extremely plain, that "he who runs may read;" and it would appear unnecessary to prove by argument, a proposition which every man of common understanding must acknowledge to be self-evident, were it not in respect to the superior abilities of those distinguished

* The particular acts of parliament imposing taxes on the Colonies in these different reigns, have been frequently referred to by the advocates for the cause of Britain, and their authenticity has been proved beyond a doubt.

leaders

Leaders of the minority, under whose administration the Declaratory Act was passed. The unanimous assent they gave to this act, is an undoubted proof that they *then* admitted parliament had a *constitutional* right to bind the Colonies "in all cases whatsoever;" yet no sooner did parliament attempt to *exercise* this *constitutional* authority by the Tea Act, than the unreasonable clamours which were raised by the instigators of rebellion in the Colonies, were loudly echoed by the champions of opposition in Britain.

It is impossible to *vindicate* their conduct on this important occasion; at *best*, it was absurd and inconsistent in the *extreme*, to assert in the most solemn manner, and in their legislative capacities, the *supremacy* of parliament over the Colonies, and afterwards, in direct opposition to this solemn declaration, to affirm in the florid language and exalted characters of patriots, that *taxation* of the Colonies by parliament was *unconstitutional*. If the Declaratory Act is constitutional, this particular exercise of a right which it declares parliament to be invested with, must be so too. One of these propositions *must* be true; parliament has a constitutional right to *tax* the Colonies, or the Declaratory Act is *unconstitutional*.

Left it should be deemed nugatory and useless to demonstrate the inconsistency of opposition, or
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to examine what *opinions* they thought proper to entertain so *many years ago*, it is necessary to observe, that they are by no means to be considered as mere *speculative* opinions of *private* men, which whether consistent, or otherwise, can be of no consequence to the public; if this was indeed the case, it would be waste of time and paper to examine them.

But when opinions, adopted by men of distinguished rank and acknowledged abilities, become *principles of action* to them, they often produce the most important effects. If to rank and abilities be added the fascinating charms of oratory, and if those who are possessed of such qualifications have, from their peculiar situation, the fittest opportunity of displaying them in *opposition* to the measures of government, the people look up to them with admiration, as the guardians of their liberties; whatever sentiments they find it *convenient* to propagate, are received as *oracles*; and the opinion of a *few*, or even of *one* man thus circumstanced, however contradictory it may be to reason and truth, however inconsistent with his *former* conduct, may not only obtain implicit belief, but become a principle of action to thousands.

There cannot possibly be a stronger instance of this than the origin of our unhappy dispute with the Colonies affords. The claims of parliament were certainly

certainly just, and were strictly conformable to the principles of the constitution; the leaders of opposition had, by their assent to the Declaratory Act, given the strongest proof that *they thought them so*; and government, in attempting to maintain the supremacy of parliament, and in the particular exertion of its authority to tax the Colonies, was asserting the rights of the British nation.—Yet, no sooner had the Colonies discovered that the pretensions of the British parliament were unjust and unconstitutional, and the minority concurred with them in these principles, which were diametrically opposite to those of the Declaratory Act, and manifestly repugnant to reason and to the interest of the people, than the cause of the Americans became popular in Britain.

Nothing could be so conducive to the success of the rebellion as the encouragement it met with in *England*; nor could any conduct be less excusable than that of the minority at this very important crisis. Had they been content with representing the *inexpediency* of proceeding to *coercive* measures, and the *impolicy* of demanding what the Colonies were determined not to grant without compulsion, and of asserting claims which, however just, we might not perhaps be able to enforce, they might have deserved the *thanks* of their country. They would certainly have been justified in advising parliament to refrain from exercising the authority
vested

vested in it by the constitution, though they could not deny that it *had* such an authority without declaring the Colonies *independent*.

For parliament either has, as the Declaratory Act asserts, a right to bind the Colonies *in all cases whatsoever*, or it has not, as the leaders of the rebellion contend, a right to bind them in *any one case whatsoever*; but it always has been "a body of men extraneous to their constitution; a set of unacknowledged individuals," whose acts *are* (and always have been esteemed by them) acts of "*pretended* legislation." These are the exact words made use of by Congress to express *their* sentiments of the British parliament, in the declaration they published to *justify* their conduct in taking up arms. The 13th article of this declaration evidently proves, that though the Congress might amuse the American people who were their *constituents*, with specious pretences, and might *seem* at first desirous of an accommodation with government, nothing was further from their intentions; and that they were determined not to sheath the sword till they had been intirely subdued, or had established their independence.

In this article they plainly declare their sentiments in regard to the *supremacy* of parliament. It is couched in the following respectful terms. "He (*i. e.* the King) has combined with *others* to sub-
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ject us to a jurisdiction *foreign* to our constitution, and *unacknowledged* by our laws; giving his assent to their *pretended* acts of legislation."

It is not any particular obnoxious or oppressive act of an *acknowledged* legislature that is *here* objected to, neither is it by any means to be understood that parliament by its tyrannical and unjust conduct to the Americans, had *driven* them to the desperate measure of *revolting* from their allegiance; though such opinions have been industriously and successfully propagated by the advocates of the American rebellion in England. The plain *unequivocal* meaning of the expressions used by Congress in this article, is, "that the King had committed an act of *injustice* to the Colonies, by entering into a combination or conspiracy with the British parliament, to subject them to its authority;—that it was a *foreign legislature*, which had not the least *right* to exert its authority over them, in any instance; that its power was not acknowledged by them, and that he had *no right* to give his assent to any of its *pretended* acts of legislation." It is impossible for language to express a more explicit declaration that independence was the *real* and *primary* object of the American rebellion; and that subjection to the British legislature, in any instance whatever, had always been accounted by the Colonies an intolerable grievance;

ance; though they had not before been presented with so fair an opportunity of redressing it.

Yet no longer ago than the last session of parliament, an honourable member, of distinguished abilities, declared, that he was ready to enter into the merits of the American war with any member of the opposite side of the House, and would *prove* it was *unjust and unconstitutional* on the part of Great Britain.

If indeed he meant any thing more by this challenge than to display his eloquence, and is prepared with arguments to demonstrate that the pretensions of parliament to sovereignty over the Colonies are unjust, and that acts of parliament are, as Congress asserts, acts of *pretended legislation*, he will at the same time prove, that the Americans had a right to declare themselves *independent* whenever they thought proper; that *every* act of the British parliament which has extended to the Colonies since their *first* establishment, is an unjust infringement on their liberty; that the Act of Settlement, the Act of Navigation, and the Declaratory Act, being the highest exertions of parliamentary supremacy, were *tyranny* in the *extreme*, and that the glorious *revolution*, which transferred the allegiance of British subjects from James the Second to William the Third, was the act of a *foreign legislature*,

lature, which had no more right to bind the Colonies than the inhabitants of Kamtchatka*.

Possibly the advocates for the British constitution may think this is proving *rather too much*; but whoever considers the superior abilities of this celebrated orator, will be convinced, that after he has gone *thus far*, he has overleaped the bounds of

* On the principles of the British constitution, the House of Commons is the *virtual* representative of *all* the Commons in the British empire, Ireland excepted, on this the right of legislation, as well as taxation, undoubtedly depends; and any objection that can be urged against the latter, is of equal validity against the former. Those who reject this idea of virtual representation as an absurdity, must adopt a much greater, by admitting, that a parliament in which the Colonies are *not* represented, has a *just* right to impose its laws upon them, though it has *no right* to tax them; or they must agree with the Congress, that the British parliament is a foreign legislature, *extraneous* to their constitution, to whose acts they owe *no* obedience. This was the avowed principle maintained by the leaders of the rebellion previous to the commencement of hostilities—They would not be taxed, *because* they were *not* represented—The same objection might with equal justice have been urged against any *other* act of parliament —“we will not acknowledge its *validity*, because we are “*not represented*,” the 13th article of the declaration of Congress, is a necessary conclusion from these premises, and the *reason* assigned by the Colonies for their refusal to admit the Tea Act, was itself an *explicit declaration of Independence*.

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common

common understandings, and may proceed as much further as he pleases without fear of pursuit or obstruction. All impediments being removed, he can easily prove that parliament may have a right to enact laws for the Colonies in *some* instances, and that in others its acts are merely *pretence*—that it is strictly *just* to declare the right of parliament to bind the Colonies in *all* cases whatsoever, though it was manifest wickedness and injustice to *exercise* this right in *any* case whatsoever—that a part is greater than the whole, that it is possible for the *same* thing to be, and *not* to be at the *same* time; or, in short, he may prove any thing he pleases;—

“ And that which was proved true before,

“ Prove false again.”

HUB.

Freedom of political enquiry is the birthright of Englishmen; but this glorious privilege is grossly abused when it is prostituted by interest or perverted by prejudice. Measures not *men* should be the objects of our speculation; and instead of tracing them to the *party* from whence they proceed, we should impartially consider whether they are likely to be productive of advantage or injury to the public. From those who (being either unable or unwilling to judge for themselves) chuse their party, and look up to its leaders as their infallible guides, the writer who views the contending factions with the impartial eye of an unprejudiced

diced spectator, has little favour to expect. If he freely censures what he apprehends to be erroneous in the conduct of Opposition, he is immediately stigmatized with the disgraceful appellation of ministerial hireling, or perhaps some term, if possible, still more opprobrious. If, on the other hand, he has not the capacity to discern that the M——y as well as the K—— can do no wrong, nor the prudence to keep his opinion *to himself*, he incurs the hazard of being persecuted by the ministerial faction, as an incendiary, and an enemy to his country.

But whoever impartially considers the conduct of these adverse parties, will see that neither has been exempt from error; and that the obstinate and impolitic perseverance of Administration has been nearly as detrimental as the intemperate, indiscriminate, and frequently unreasonable opposition of the Minority. Justice undoubtedly demanded, that the Colonies should bear a part of that burden which had been so grievously increased on their account. The constitution certainly vested in the British parliament a lawful authority to tax the Colonies, and a *right* to enforce their compliance. But though the demand made by Government was strictly *just* and *reasonable*, and though no objection could possibly be urged against the *particular tax* which was the immediate cause of the revolt; Administration committed

an irremediable error by recurring to *coercive* measures before all lenient methods had been found ineffectual. They ought to have remembered the resolute conduct of the Americans in opposing the Stamp Act; and to have considered that policy forbade the exercise of a right which, however just, would certainly be *contested*; which, if attained, was not likely to be productive of much benefit to the Mother Country; and, if lost, might endanger those infinitely more valuable prerogatives which had never before been called in question. The strong and repeated arguments of the Minority to prove the *inexpediency* of pursuing coercive measures, deserved the most *serious* attention from Administration; and even their objections against the *justice* of the American war, however unreasonable in *themselves*, should have determined Government to *decline* the contest, as they precluded all rational hopes of success, by *encouraging* the rebellion in America, at the same time that they rendered the cause of Government *unpopular* in England.

But Administration cannot be exculpated, even if it should be admitted that the war was not only *just* but *expedient*; because the *means* pursued were *totally* inadequate to the *end*. When compulsion was resolved on, that resolution should have been immediately enforced, not by prohibitory and restraining acts of parliament, which the Americans
then

then regarded with contempt and derision; nor by the feeble efforts of a few British regiment, cooped up in Boston, which served rather to *stimulate* than to suppress the rebellion; but by the *united* and vigorous exertions of the most numerous and powerful fleet and army that the unexhausted and unrivalled strength of the British empire, *at that time*, enabled them to send forth in vindication of its rights.

Had this conduct been pursued by Administration, the rebellion might have been crushed in its beginning; or had they, on finding how greatly they had *undervalued* the power of the Americans, and how inadequate the forces they sent were to the attempt of conquering them by *land*, abandoned this expensive, destructive, chimerical project, and confined their operations to a *maritime war*, they might have entertained more rational hopes of success; and if their attempts had *ultimately failed*, they would certainly have saved thousands of lives and millions of property expended by Britain and by America, to their *mutual* prejudice in this fatal contest. The army employed by Government in America, has been a *bond of union* to the confederated Colonies; and the money circulated on the Continent, by means of that army, has supplied them with resources for continuing the war, which they would not have found in the paper dollars of Congress.

Had this army been withdrawn, except such part as might be deemed necessary for the defence of particular towns on the Continent, the trade of the Colonies might have been totally destroyed by the number of cruizers which Great-Britain, *then at peace* with the maritime powers of Europe, might have employed on that service. The Americans, thus deprived of their commerce, oppressed by *domestic tyrants*, distressed by internal divisions, and having *no British army to oppose*, would have been disposed to have accepted reasonable terms, even from the *present* Administration, instead of courting the alliance of their treacherous and inveterate enemies.

On the other hand, the most hardy advocate for the opposition cannot deny, that the exaggerated representations of our national weakness and internal divisions, which were continually repeated from the minority side of both Houses of Parliament, and of which the elaborate and florid speeches of those who were accounted *the friends of the people* were entirely composed, had the strongest tendency to *accelerate* the alliance between France and America, to encourage the rebellion, and to invite the attacks of our enemies, to whom they presented the most flattering prospects of success.

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The superior abilities of most of the popular orators, the respectable characters of many, and the very considerable property which *some* of them possess in this country, will not allow any impartial man to believe they could have any other object in view than that which they openly avowed; which was to awaken ministry from their lethargic indolence, and to *forewarn* the nation of the impending danger. This intention was certainly laudable, and their eloquent harangues might have been productive of much benefit, without a possibility of being in the least degree injurious to the nation, could they have been *confined* within its limits. But, unhappily for England, the information intended for our ministers, was immediately conveyed to our enemies; and what was designed as a serious warning to us, was regarded as a *pressing invitation* by them. The abilities, the rank, the characters of the popular orators, and above all their constant and zealous professions of attachment to the public good, were strong presumptive evidence that what they ventured to assert was incontestably true; and gave foreigners room to believe the nation must be even in a *more* defenceless and distracted state, than their regard to its welfare would allow them to acknowledge.

There cannot possibly be any thing more derogatory to the dignity of parliament *at all times*,

nor more evidently impolitic when the nation is engaged in foreign war, and torn by intestine convulsions, than the unlimited permission of publishing parliamentary debates on questions the most important and delicate in their nature, and frequently the most improper to be communicated to the enemies of the state; for that such intelligence must be the *necessary* consequence of their publication, no one will be hardy enough to deny.

This may justly be accounted *one* fertile source of our public calamities; for it cannot escape the notice of the most superficial observer, that the enemies of our government, whether foreign or domestic, have actually converted it to the worst of purposes. The publication of parliamentary debates was wisely prohibited by our ancestors, even in times of profound peace; but since the commencement of our unhappy divisions, discord has been allowed the most *ample scope*, and supplied with this most convenient vehicle to disseminate her poison through the whole extent of the British empire. It seems strange that a government, which, we are continually informed, is aiming at arbitrary power, should tolerate an evil which leads to unbridled licentiousness! But not satisfied with this extraordinary and unaccountable indulgence, the enemies of our prosperity never fail to *misrepresent* those debates they are allowed to publish. In every stage of our destructive contest

test with the Colonies, the most florid speeches of the leaders of opposition have been thus transmitted to America; and frequently accompanied with the most invidious and inflammatory comments. Thus even the most upright intentions have, by the emissaries of our enemies, been perverted to promote their iniquitous designs; and those distinguished characters, whom the British nation regard as the patriotic defenders of their liberties, are esteemed in America the champions of rebellion. Nor does the mischief end there—for even our *natural enemies* avail themselves of the information they are thus impolitically permitted to obtain. What can be more advantageous to them, than to have our internal weakness and divisions—our intended operations—and the vulnerable parts of our empire thus exposed to their view! What more destructive to ourselves, than to point out to them where to attack us, and admonish them what they have to defend!

It was peculiarly unfortunate for England, that whilst our enemies fully availed themselves of the information which the parliamentary debates afforded them, Administration seemed totally to disregard the important and well-grounded assurances they continually received from the Opposition, of the hostile intentions and preparations of France and Spain. Great, and (considering the number and power of our enemies) glorious efforts

efforts have been made by government to oppose them: even at this time our navy, however inadequate to contend with the *united* fleets of the *three* principal maritime powers in Europe, and to defend our valuable and extensive possessions in America and the East and West Indies, is far superior to that of any other nation in the world, or to what it was when we were a flourishing and *united* people, in the meridian of our glory.

Even now, though the British empire is dismembered by an unnatural rebellion, and shaken by internal convulsions, Britain rises superior to the combined attacks of her enemies, and affords to the admiring world an example of power and greatness which no other nation in modern times can equal, and which those the most renowned in history have not surpassed.

They who so freely accuse Administration of betraying their trust, by neglecting to have *at this time* a naval force superior to that of France, Spain and Holland in conjunction, blame them without reason; for what they require is manifestly *impossible* to be performed.

But though Administration cannot justly be censured for want of vigour in maintaining the *present* very unequal contest, their neglecting or delaying the exertion of their utmost efforts *before* the
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the alliance of our enemies became so formidable cannot be excused.

In all their operations they have been *too late*. Had an *army*, composed of *half* the troops which at *different* times have been sent to America, landed there on the first appearance of the rebellion, it would probably have been destroyed in its infancy. Even after the Americans were joined by France, and hostilities with that power were resolved on, government had the fairest opportunity to blast the hopes, and punish the treachery of that haughty and ambitious nation.

Many months before they openly avowed in parliament their knowledge of the commercial treaty between France and the Congress being actually signed, nay even at the very time they affected to believe France had *no such intention*, they were repeatedly informed by the *minority*, that the treaty was actually on the tapis, and soon would be, if it then was not finally concluded.

If, instead of disregarding this information, they had availed themselves of it as they ought to have done, by making the most vigorous and expeditious preparations for the approaching war, and by augmenting the strength of the navy to its present formidable state, or to the highest degree that they possibly could, the designs of France might

might have been frustrated, her commerce destroyed, the Spanish and Dutch war prevented, the American rebellion subdued, and Britain might *still* have possessed the unrivalled and undisputed empire of the sea.

These signal advantages might, and in all probability would, have accrued to Britain, if Administration had sent to sea in the summer of the year 1778, a fleet *decisively* superior to that of France,

When the English and French fleets met, and *passed* each other on the 27th of July in that year, they were *nearly* equal, or if in point of force we had *rather* the advantage, it was more than compensated by the order and regularity of their line of battle; nor can any blame reasonably fall on the British Admiral *on this account*, when it is considered, that his line was disordered and broken by those manœuvres he was *obliged* to practise, to bring on an engagement which the enemy was *desirous* of avoiding, and determined not to begin till an opportunity was presented them of fighting to manifest advantage. It is by no means consistent with my design to rejudge the conduct of our Admirals on that memorable day, or to revive a question which had better never have been canvassed; the only inference here intended

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to be drawn from the event of that engagement is, that if the enemy, (notwithstanding they had, from the peculiar disposition of their fleet, clearly the advantage) *dared* not venture to try their force *handsomely* with us the next day, it is evident, that an addition of only a *few ships* to our fleet *at that time*, would either have ensured our victory, or kept the French fleet blocked up in Brest, and left their trade defenceless, while our's would have been effectually secured.

But though Administration were certainly blaineable for not sending out a *larger* fleet if they had it ever in their power, the force that *actually* was opposed to that of the enemy might have made the 27th of July a *proud day for England*, if *discord* and animosity had been banished from the breasts of its commanders; if they had been inspired with the *genuine* spirit of patriotism, and acted with *unanimity*, as well as *zeal*, to maintain the honor of the British flag. But what triumph did it afford our enemy!—how disgraceful was it to ourselves, to see the antient and honorable title of *British* sunk in the modern distinctions of ministerial and patriotic admirals! To find that generous ardour and emulation which our naval commanders formerly manifested in asserting the glory, and revenging the injuries of their country, now ignobly perverted to the contemptible and mischievous purposes of party rancour.

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The consequences that have ensued from the trials of Keppel and Palliser, have perhaps been more extensively injurious to us, and beneficial to our enemies, than a victory over our fleets.

When men, to whom the important trust of conducting "a nation's battles," is confided, and who ought to be actuated by the most cordial *unanimity*, agree in nothing but in reciprocally charging each other with a *breach* of duty, their dissention spreads like a contagion through the various subordinate classes of those under their command, and is sufficient, without any other assistance, to generate an inveterate faction which may prove fatal to the nation where it is produced. But when this dissention is *itself* nothing more than a necessary and obvious *effect*, resulting from the malignancy of *faction**, already grown to maturity; and when the country which has generated and nourished this monster, is at the same time attacked by numerous, powerful, and inveterate enemies, it becomes the indispensable duty of every individual to exert his utmost endeavours to restore that internal unanimity which can alone enable us to oppose their combined force, with the least rational hope of success.

The opinion too easily adopted by the adherents to either party, that all our political evils

* By *faction* is here meant *party spirit in general*.

arise from the weak or wicked conduct of their *opponents*, has the strongest tendency to diffuse and inflame those dissensions and animosities which have so long and so fatally prevailed among us. An attempt, therefore, to prove that *both* parties have, in many instances, greatly erred; and that notwithstanding much mischief has undoubtedly ensued from their errors, it is unjust and irrational to attribute to the incapacity or wickedness of *any party*, those public calamities which human wisdom can neither foresee or prevent, may not be intirely useles.

Though it cannot be supposed the *corrupt*, dependant on Administration, or the weak but zealous *tool* of Opposition, will be brought to acknowledge the fallibility of their leaders, the impartial public, who have ability and resolution to think for themselves, may, from a transient review of public transactions, easily discover, that each party has been unreasonably severe in aggravating the guilt of its opponents, though neither have been exempt from blame.

If they look back to the glorious atchievements of our naval and military commanders in the late war, they will be convinced of the advantages resulting from *unanimity*; while the events of the present days as clearly prove the ruinous consequences

quences of our party disputes. The native valour of Britons has not deserted them. If examples were requisite, many instances might be produced of as steady and heroic courage displayed in *this* war, as in any recorded in the British annals. But this, among a nation of heroes, would be a task equally unprofitable and invidious*.

The unabated martial ardour of our officers, soldiers, and sailors, has, on various occasions,

* The glorious action off the island of St. Kitt's, in February last, when Sir Samuel Hood, with twenty-two sail of the line, defeated M. De Grasse, who had twenty-nine, in two different attacks, incontestibly proves, that the native valour of the British seamen cannot be dismayed by the superior numbers or force of the enemy, when *unanimity* prevails in the breasts of their commanders. The opinion of the gallant Admiral on this subject, is manifest from the following paragraph in his letter to the Admiralty, which reflects equal honour on him, and on the officers and seamen of his fleet :

“ Would the event of a battle have determined the fate
“ of the island, I would without hesitation have attacked
“ the enemy, from my *knowledge* how much was to be
“ expected from an English squadron, commanded by
“ men amongst whom *there is no other contention* than who
“ shall be most forward in rendering services to his King
“ and country : *Herein I placed the utmost confidence*, and
“ should not, I fully trust, have been disappointed.”

See London Gazette, March 12, 1782.

been

been displayed with distinguished lustre. Even our enemies must acknowledge, that our fleets and armies have obtained many brilliant victories when greatly inferior in force and numbers to theirs; but what have been the fruits of those conquests, from which the greatest advantages were expected? What benefits can Englishmen and their American brethren rationally hope for, from the *reciprocal slaughter* of each other, in this unnatural, impolitic, obstinate war?

Is it not evident to every man of common sense, on this or the other side of the Atlantic, that while we are *mutually* distressing and destroying each other, we are effectually *servng* the cause of our enemies? It signifies little to them, whether victory inclines to England or America, since they are convinced which ever has the glory, they are sure to acquire the advantage.

They know we are fighting their battles, and their whole conduct evidently proves, that the constant object of their treacherous policy has been by supplying the Americans with ineffectual succours to protract a war still more ruinous to them than to England; and when these *antient enemies* have sufficiently exhausted and impoverished each other, America will become an easy prey to the artful and perfidious invaders.

The *impolicy* of our Administration persisting in their absurd and impracticable plan of conquering the revolted Colonies, has often been urged with the strongest force of reason and eloquence by the leaders of the Minority; and without examining too critically the *motives* of their *invariable* Opposition to *every* measure of government, all true Englishmen, whose judgements are not perverted by party prejudice, must do them the justice to acknowledge, that in this particular instance they have acted the part of *real patriots*, and deserve the *applause* of their countrymen.

There may be, even in the Congress itself, many whose disinterested patriotism is inflamed by the wrongs which their bleeding country suffers, from the avarice, ambition and tyranny of crafty hypocrites. But freedom of debate is equally incompatible with the new constitution of the independent states of America, as freedom of the press. The murmurs and complaints of an oppressed and injured people, would ill accord with the joyful pæans of liberty; nor can the Congress give a stronger proof of their skill in the science of government, than they have done by the *prudent* restrictions of a privilege, which they could not consistently with *their* constitution allow. Yet perhaps the utmost efforts of human wisdom will not long be able to restrain that popular resentment which an unremitting series of hardships, ill-fortune

ill-fortune, insults, and oppression, continually irritates and inflames. The time may not be far distant, when the *honest*, disinterested delegates of the American people may form a *respectable minority* in Congress, and may dare to arraign the measures of a *wicked and arbitrary majority*, in language as *free*, if not as courtly as that of the most celebrated orators in St. St——ns chapel.

Let us suppose that time now arrived, the Congress assembled, and the subject of their deliberation to be, the expediency of continuing the war with Great Britain—is it not probable that a *real* friend to the people of America, of a plain understanding, superior to party influence, though unadorned with the fascinating charms of eloquence, might thus express the honest dictates of an heart devoted to its country's service.

“ The question now before us, Mr. President, is of such importance, that I cannot rest satisfied with giving a *silent* vote; and I rely on the *well-known* candour and liberality of this august assembly, for the indulgence of a patient, if not an attentive hearing. We are now at the close of another expensive, bloody, but *indecisive* campaign, met to consider what *further services* we can render our constituents; and whether it is expedient to continue a war, from which, in its infancy, we predicted the most

happy events. Liberty, independence, and an *exemption* from the burden of *taxes*, were promised as the *certain* rewards of our toil; how far these promises have hitherto been fulfilled, whether we are likely to obtain them by perseverance in hostile measures, or in the terms of the question before us, "whether it is expedient to continue the war with Great Britain," I will submit to your impartial determination, if you will bear with me while I call back your attention to the *origin*, the *objects*, the *progress* of the war; and compare our situation *previous* to its breaking out, with our *present* circumstances. The *origin* of this fatal dispute was the demand of the British parliament to *tax* us, and our refusal to comply with it. I shall not trespass on your patience by idle and speculative inquiries, whether this demand was oppressive and tyrannical on the part of Great-Britain, or whether our determination rather to destroy our *protectors*, than to bear the least share of those burdens we had so greatly increased, was unjust and ungrateful on ours.

The discussion of these points may afford entertainment to the speculative philosopher, but they are ill adapted to the genius of the statesman, whose maxim is, that *private virtue* must be confined to *private life*. He would readily admit, that the rights of *meum & tuum* ought to be preserved; that justice is due to individuals, grati-
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tude to benefactors, fidelity to friends. But tell him of the *favours* conferred by one nation on another, or of the *moral* obligations subsisting between them, and he would laugh at your ignorance. Interest, he would inform you, is the *soul* of all public bodies; the service they render others is merely with a view to their *own* advantage; it is the *generosity of an usurer*, and deserves no better return.

Policy, therefore, should influence the determination of public measures; whatever tends to the advantage of the community, should be accounted *just*; and whatever is expedient must consequently be *right*. Thus then let it be between England and America; if the haughty Britons call us unjust and ungrateful, let us retort on them the charge of tyranny and oppression; if they stigmatize our cause with the odious name of rebellion. let *us* pronounce it a noble struggle for liberty: if policy authorizes the continuance of the war, it is glorious; it must be *right* to persevere; and if fortune crowns our efforts with success, we will be content to leave them the consolation of calling us *ungrateful rebels*, if at the same time they are obliged to acknowledge us *free and independent Americans*.

Such have been the sentiments maintained by the majority in Congress, from the commencement

ment of hostilities to the present moment; and such, Mr. President, would be *mine*, if I thought *liberty* could be produced by unexampled acts of cruelty and oppression; *wealth* could flow from accumulated debts and increasing taxes; *plenty* from desolation; glory or advantage from a *war* with Great Britain; or *that* independence which a *true* friend to America would desire, from our *alliance* with France.

Or if I could be such a traitor to my country, as to clothe the most sordid avarice, ambition, and self interest, in the *specious* garb of patriotism as a member of *this assembly*, “ my voice would be *still* for war; with the dark soul, and the dissembled treachery of Sempronius,

“ I’d bellow out for freedom and my country.

“ And mouthe at Cæsar till I shake the senate.”

It is by no means clear to me, that we could have derived any solid benefit from independence, which we did not enjoy while subjects to the British government, even if we could have obtained it by *treaty*, when we first took up arms to demand it; to gain it by force of arms would have been still *less* to our advantage, could we have obtained it without foreign assistance; and instead of diminishing, must greatly have *increased* our taxes, as the event has too fatally proved. But I could weep tears of mingled grief and
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rage, when I consider the wretched state to which my country is now reduced; when I see America enslaved, ruined, deceived by her pretended friends; and alike forgetful of her true interest and her former glory; of her love to Britain, and her just abhorrence of France, become the *servile instrument* of that ambitious nation, to humble a power which is at once the object of their hatred, their envy, and their fear. What can yield higher pleasure to the enemies of Britain and America? What can be an *heavier curse* to themselves, than this ill-fated, this destructive war, in which they strain every nerve, and exhaust, in frantic efforts to destroy each other, that strength, which *united* might still bid defiance to the world in arms.

When we first commenced hostilities, we *disclaimed* any intention of declaring ourselves independent; all we pretended to require, was a repeal of those acts of the British legislature, which we esteemed unjust and oppressive; yet our revolt was soon followed by an *explicit* declaration of independence; and all our measures from that time, clearly shewed a determination not to sheathe the sword, or even to hearken to any proposals from Great Britain, till that claim was admitted. We charge the English administration with demanding *unconditional submission*; but in fact it is demanded by *ourselves*. For what more can we

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obtain by the most successful war, than that independence which we make the indispensable preliminary to *any* proposal for an accommodation? What is this but saying, give up the *whole* matter in dispute, and *then* we will *treat* with you. So long ago as the year 1775, an opportunity was afforded us of terminating this unhappy contest to the mutual advantage of America and Britain, and to the disappointment of our insidious enemies. Had we not contemptuously *rejected* the treaty then anxiously desired by England, we might have obtained just and honourable terms, the proposals made us were *at least* entitled to our serious consideration; and if they had been deemed inadmissible, we might have stated our objections; if at length the treaty had been broken off, we might not *then* have been without an excuse for continuing the war. But surely nothing could be more rash, impolitic, or *insolent*, than our *refusal* to treat, and our declaration, "that the offers of the British government were *insidious*." I shall not, at this late hour, enter into a detail of events which all here must remember; or of the various *mean* artifices and *false* suggestions by which the unhappy Americans have been *led* on from year to year, in the prosecution of this ruinous war: neither shall I describe the cruel, tyrannical acts by which many of them have been reluctantly dragged to recruit our exhausted and almost famished armies in the *pretended* cause
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of liberty; or the unexampled persecutions exercised on those who *dared* to express their *abhorrence* of our measures, or even to shew the least symptoms of dislike to our government. Let us, for a moment, recall to our minds the *happiness*, the prosperity we enjoyed, before the *dæmon* of civil discord exerted his baleful influence among us. We were *then* a flourishing and united people, blessed with the *full* enjoyment of civil and religious liberty; our fields were crowned with plenty, our towns enriched by commerce, population was rapidly increasing; arts and sciences were held in just estimation by us, and we wanted nothing but a *conviction* of our happiness to render us the envy and admiration of mankind. But dissatisfied with the blessings we possessed, and eager to obtain that *fancied* good beyond our reach, we are *justly*, though *severely* punished by the consequences of our unreasonable desires. Our *seven years war* in pursuit of that delusive phantom independence, have, like those predicted in Pharoah's dream, *devoured* our former plenty. They have even produced effects still more dreadful than the Egyptian famine; the nearest ties of friendship and consanguinity are violently torn asunder: civil discord eradicates every social virtue, every humane sentiment from our breasts. Her horrid footsteps now mark with desolation and blood, those plains which so lately laughed and sung with plenty; the piercing cries
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of widows and orphans, succeed to the jocund notes of peace and joy! And shall *that* Congress in whom our country reposes its confidence, from whom it implores protection and relief, be *unmoved* by the complicated miseries of the people? Shall they calmly vote the continuance of that war *expedient*, from which such complicated evils have proceeded? But perhaps the *same* arguments I have heard from the other side of the House, at the conclusion of every indecisive campaign, may now be repeated. We may *again* be told, that nothing but *perseverance* is required to gain the object of our wishes; that *another* campaign will secure our independence, as Great Britain, disunited, depopulated, and on the verge of rebellion and public bankruptcy, must *inevitably* sink under her own burdens, and the weight of her combined and powerful enemies.

As a *sincere* friend to *America*, I hope this prophecy will prove as false *now* as on former occasions, because it is on Britain *alone* we must *ultimately* depend for the preservation of our religion, our liberties, and our country. Is it possible to conceive us so *grossly* ignorant to be imposed upon by the specious promises of France? Can we believe our independence will *ever* be established by an alliance with our inveterate *enemies*? Examine their conduct toward us from the beginning of the war to the present moment, and you will see the strongest reason to be convinced, if it is yet a matter

matter of doubt, that their *original* plan was to weaken, to deceive, and finally to enslave us. In pursuance of this design, they suffered us to contend with the power of Great Britain for *four* campaigns, before they *openly* espoused our cause. Had they not meant to let us *exhaust* ourselves in this unequal contest, they would have assisted us in its beginning; but when they at length found it expedient to declare themselves in our favour, how *feeble* was the aid they afforded us! Just sufficient to keep alive a contention still more ruinous to ourselves than to Britain, though manifestly advantageous to our treacherous allies? When they have on any occasion acted with *vigour*, it is evident they solely consulted their *own* interest, without the least regard to ours.

Can you bear to recollect with cool indifference, the *soul affront* offered to America by the French General, when elated with the conquest of St. Vincent's, he *insolently* demanded the surrender of Savannah *to the arms of France*? Every true American must *rejoice* to see this valiant hero disgracefully and precipitately flying before an *band* of brave determined Britons. The events of this war oblige us to *admire* our enemies, and *despise* our pretended friends. What service has their boasted alliance yet rendered to the cause of American independence? It is true, they have taken Grenada, St. Vincent's, and Tobago from England; but do *we* derive any benefit from their conquest?

conquest? What advantage was it to *us* when they seized Rhode Island, on its being evacuated by the British forces, and fortified it for themselves *? Instances like these need no comment. And trust me, the *people* of America, however infatuated and abused, may soon be awakened to a sense of feeling and resenting their wrongs. Delay not then to make that *now* your *own* act, which may otherwise be done without the *form* of asking your consent. Break this infamous, this *accursed league* with France, before it is broken by the vindictive rage of that people, for whose benefit alone you are invested with power; to whom *you dare not deny yourselves to be accountable* for the exercise of it; and before whose awful tribunal you may soon be summoned to answer for your conduct. Act like *true patriots*, while the power of directing public measures *still* remains. Let this campaign put an *end* to hostilities between Britain and America; propose such terms of accommodation as may be content with our rights and our dignity to offer, and with her's to accept. If they are rejected, and nothing but unconditional submission will satisfy, defend yourselves wherever you are attacked; resolve rather *to die in the last dike*, than

* It appears that they have acted in the same manner at York-town and Gloucester in Virginia; and it is highly probable they will keep possession of that province, unless they can be driven out by the united force of Britain and America.

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to yield up the *liberties* of America to *any* nation upon earth; but be assured they are in greater danger, at this moment, from the *secret* machinations of our insidious allies, than they ever can be from the misguided, though generous and manly ardour of Britons."

Every real friend to America must be convinced of the inexpedience of continuing the war with Great Britain, and of adhering to the alliance with France; and if the privilege of free debate was permitted *there*, would probably speak his sentiments in more strong and forcible terms than they are expressed in the above speech.

The same important question which I have supposed to be debated in Congress, now engrosses the most earnest attention of parliament; and it must afford the greatest satisfaction to every true friend to Britain and America to observe, that unanimity seems to be in a great measure restored, and that *every branch* of the legislature, and even the * Americans themselves agree in the *necessity*

* Mr. Fox openly declared in the House of Commons, in his speech on the Attorney General's motion for leave to bring in a bill for obtaining a peace, or truce, with America, " That he had authority, late as it was, to negotiate for a peace with America, and he had strong hopes of its being crowned with success."

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of terminating a dispute originating in folly—
maintained on both sides by too much obstinacy—
and, if longer continued, inevitably and rapidly
sinking the whole British empire in one general
ruin.

If the arguments repeatedly urged by the
leaders of Opposition to prove, that the attempt
to conquer America is not only impolitic, but
impracticable, now we have such numerous and
powerful foreign enemies to contend with, have
not met with that degree of attention to which
they were justly intitled, the unfortunate fate
of the gallant army in Virginia, has brought
conviction home to the breasts of ministers; and
the use which France seems inclined to make of
her victory, may probably open the eyes of the
deluded Americans. It is demonstrably evident,
that while we are continuing this unnatural war
against each other, we are mutually serving the
purpose of our enemies, and their victories are
rivetting the fetters of American slavery. No
event therefore could possibly tend so entirely to
disconcert the measures of France, as a total and
immediate suspension of hostilities. For if it
should be succeeded by a peace, or even a truce,
she must either be obliged to withdraw her forces
from North America, where their presence would
neither be wanted nor desired, or she must throw
off

off the mask, and openly avow her determination to retain what she has acquired, and to conquer those provinces she pretends to protect.

In the first case, the only material obstruction to a peace would be removed by the voluntary act of France, which is hardly to be expected; but if they adopt the latter measure, as it is probable they may, their alliance with America would be immediately dissolved; secret animosity and contempt would be converted to open hostility, between these antient enemies on the one side, while on the other a mutual conviction of gross errors committed, and severe losses sustained by Britain and America during the continuance of a contest equally ruinous and destructive to both, may excite a reciprocal desire to be reconciled. The most powerful motives that can actuate the human mind at this moment, exert their combined force to *hasten* and to *cement* that union, so indispensably necessary to the existence of an empire, which is nearly destroyed by its unnatural divisions, and which might else have defied the utmost efforts of its enemies.

It was by this *union* alone it attained a degree of prosperity and grandeur which excited the envy and admiration of mankind. Like a superb and well built structure erected on a solid basis, it
seemed

seemed to defy the assaults of time and fortune; but its enemies were sensible that their craft might undermine what their force was unable to subvert; and by artfully exciting the spirit of discord, they have attempted to sap the foundation of our greatness. Hitherto their efforts have been too successful; but it is not yet too late to stop their further progress.

The happy time is now arrived in which this important purpose may be effected; winter has in some measure suspended the destructive ravages of war; and in the calm and clement period necessarily allotted for deliberation, the effusion of British and American blood from the commencement of this unhappy contest to the present hour, and the *increasing* devastation of each *indesistive* campaign, must excite sentiments of grief and horror in the breast of every member in the great councils of Britain and America, who is not totally insensible of the miseries of his bleeding country.

The conciliatory measures lately adopted prove, that these effects have been *already* produced; and the motion * made in the House of Commons by the Attorney General, and unanimously

* On the 5th of March, 1782.

agreed

agreed to, gives an earnest of events still more desirable than a suspension of hostilities; it plainly indicates a *design* to restore that reciprocal intercourse of commerce which has been so long and so fatally obstructed by the ruinous American war. A ray of hope darts through the gloom which a series of losses and national disgraces and calamities has spread around us; the deep laid schemes of our enemies may still prove abortive; peace may soon be restored to America and to Europe, and the British empire again connected in a firm and permanent bond of union, and enriched by the returning influx of commerce from every quarter of the globe, may, in a course of time, regain its former splendor,

P O S T S C R I P T.

THE foregoing remarks were written during the summer recess, and intended to be published previous to the present meeting of parliament, though their publication has been unavoidably delayed.

But as the writer totally disclaims the most distant connection with any party, he does not
conceive

conceive the entire change of the ministry, which has been effected since his remarks were committed to the press, to be any reason for withdrawing them.

On the contrary, he esteems the present to be the most favourable opportunity to persuade his countrymen, that a vigorous and unanimous support of the measures of government, against the alarming combination of our foreign enemies, is the only human means to preserve our existence as a people.

When a government, constituted on the principles of liberty, is engaged in war, the administration which is unpopular must be unfortunate. The abilities of the late minister are universally acknowledged; the virtue and integrity, so eminently conspicuous in his private character, are above the reach of calumny, and have frequently extracted praise even from his most determined opponents; the cause he zealously maintained, he conceived to be that of justice and of his country—but he was deprived of that popular confidence, which, in the glorious Administration of the immortal Chatham, invigorated the operations of the cabinet, the navy, and the army.

Discord had distracted our councils, tarnished the British flag, defeated our armies, and dis-
membered

membered our empire. The voice of the people demanded a change of Administration, and his Majesty acted with equal wisdom and patriotism in hearkening to that voice, and making choice of Ministers whose abilities are unquestioned, and who possess the highest degree of popularity.

The most beneficial consequences may rationally be expected from a change, which will abate the fury of party rage, and restore that unanimity which has so long and so fatally been interrupted. — What can be more probable, than that America, convinced by dear-bought experience of the evils resulting from her unnatural revolt, and still more unnatural alliance, may be anxious to treat for peace? And who can be more acceptable negotiators, than those who now occupy the highest departments of the state?

Can there be a prospect more pleasing to Britain, than to see her patriotic champions now invested with ample power to redress those evils of which they have so loudly complained? Where will corruption fly for refuge now she is banished from court, and her strong holds are in possession of her inveterate enemies?

Instead of that profusion, those usurious contracts, that rapacious avarice, that undue influence, which were so lately the continual subjects of complaint,

plains, may we not now, with the greatest assurance, promise ourselves a happy and speedy release from these accumulated burdens? May we not expect to see the most rigid economy prevail in the various departments of the state, when the most lucrative posts are occupied by those reformers, who have now the fairest opportunity to rectify those abuses, which they so justly complained of? May not this zealous friend to his country, when he reflects on the probable consequences of this amazing revolution in Administration, be transported with patriotic rapture, and exclaim in the words of the poet:

" All crimes shall cease and ancient fraud shall fall,
 " Returning justice lift aloft her scale,
 " Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
 " And white-rob'd innocence from heaven descend!

If indeed this prophecy should be fulfilled *but in part*—if the present Administration carry with them into office the same disinterested zeal for the welfare of their country which they professed when in opposition—and if their exaltation should be the happy means, in the hands of Providence, to restore peace and prosperity to this distracted empire, they will merit the highest honours which a generous Sovereign can confer, and the loudest applause which a grateful people can bestow.

